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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Letter dated 18 November 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 111.

(Signed) İnal BATU
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

LETTER DATED 17 NOVEMBER 1993 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to refer to the statement made by the Greek Cypriot delegate at the Third Committee, on 15 November 1993, on agenda item 111 entitled "Advancement of women".

It is not my intention to dwell on the substance of this agenda item, except to say that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, although prevented from becoming a party to the relevant international conventions for known reasons, nevertheless fully observes and upholds the principles enunciated in all international instruments concerning women, both in law and in practice.

My purpose in writing is to put on record our indignation at the exploitation, by the Greek Cypriot side, of every conceivable occasion for the purpose of generating anti-Turkish propaganda, even on unrelated subjects, such as the advancement of women. It is true that "painful developments ... marred the life of the Republic of Cyprus from its very inception", but this is an understatement even if meant to describe the wilful actions of the Greek Cypriots to destroy the bi-communal Republic and annex the island to Greece. The Greek Cypriot onslaught on the Turkish Cypriot community launched in December 1963, in addition to the casualties it caused in the male population, left hundreds of women and children dead, wounded or missing and thousands of mothers grieving over the tragic loss or disappearance of their loved ones.

Added to the long list of Turkish Cypriot women victims were those who were murdered, en masse, together with their menfolk, in the villages of Murataga, Atlilar, Sandallar and other villages that were attacked by Greek Cypriot armed elements in 1974. It is an insult to their memory and a shame on the officials of a community which has perpetrated these crimes to falsely blame others for the agony of their own women, which in any event was the inevitable consequence of the Greek Cypriot side's own actions.

Today, contrary to what the Greek Cypriot delegate is claiming, the provocative demonstrations staged by Greek Cypriot women at our borders constitute an exploitation of women for political gain and do little to improve relations between the two communities. If the Greek Cypriot community, women and men alike, is genuinely interested in peaceful coexistence with the Turkish Cypriots, they should first of all abandon their hostile attitude towards our people and stop this senseless campaign of slander and defamation.

I should be grateful if this letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 111.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus